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THE GLOBES GET LESS MEAN

Jimmy Fallon was no Ricky Gervais as this year's host. 18

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CAN'T CATCH A BREAK

The Giants offense couldn't make a big play and their defense couldn't figure out Aaron Rodgers as their season came to a bitter end against the Packers on Sunday. 26

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AIDE: TRUMP ACCEPTS US INTEL ON RUSSIA HACKING

Donald Trump accepts the intelligence community's conclusion that Russia engaged in cyberattacks affecting the presidential election and may take actions in response, his incoming chief of staff said on Sunday. Reince Priebus said Trump believes Russia was behind the intrusions into the Democratic Party organizations, though he did not clarify whether the president-elect agreed that the hacks were directed by Russian President Vladimir Putin. "He accepts the fact that this particular case was entities in Russia so that's not the issue," Priebus said on "Fox News Sunday." Priebus' comments marked a significant shift away from the repeated dismissals by Trump of Russian interference in the presidential election. REUTERS

FORMER IRAN PRESIDENT DIES OF HEART ATTACK

Former Iranian president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani died on Sunday at the age of 82, state media reported, a big blow to moderates and reformists deprived now of their most influential supporter in the Islamic establishment. "Ayatollah Hashemi Rafsanjani was taken to hospital after heart attack and more than an hourlong efforts by doctors to revive him were not successful," the deputy minister of health was quoted by Fars news agency as saying. Residents said a crowd gathered outside the hospital in northern Tehran where Rafsanjani was taken. Mehdi, the imprisoned son of Hashemi who is in jail on corruption charges, attended the hospital to say goodbye to the body of his father. REUTERS

WELCOME TO METRO.US!

Donald Trump will soon become the wealthiest U.S. president, but plenty of wealth precedes him. Can you guess who they are? Who was richer: JFK or George Washington? Check out our list of the 10 richest presidents at **metro.us/news**.

WEB PRODUCER LEXIS SACHDEV

FOUR DEAD IN PALESTINIAN TRUCK ATTACK IN JERUSALEM

A Palestinian rammed his truck into a group of Israeli soldiers on a popular promenade in Jerusalem on Sunday, killing four in an attack that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said is likely to have been inspired by Islamic State.

GETTY IMAGES

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

GUN GIVEN BACK TO FLA. SHOOTER LAST MONTH

Police in Alaska took a handgun from the man accused of killing five people at Fort Lauderdale's airport on Friday, but they returned it to him last month after a medical evaluation found he was not mentally ill, authorities said. Esteban Santiago, a 26-year-old Iraq war veteran, had a history of acting erratically and investigators are probing whether mental illness played a role in the latest U.S. mass shooting. According to court papers, he told agents he planned the attack and bought a one-way ticket to Florida. Santiago was charged on Saturday in federal court and could potentially face the death penalty if convicted in the case, U.S. prosecutors said. REUTERS

N. KOREA MISSILE TESTING 'SERIOUS THREAT' TO US

North Korea's nuclear weapons capabilities and ballistic missile defense programs constitute a "serious threat" to the United States, Defense Secretary Ash Carter said on Sunday. The United States is prepared to shoot down a North Korean missile launch or test "if it were coming towards our territory or the territory of our friends and allies," Carter said during an appearance on NBC's "Meet the Press." REUTERS

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2039

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Study: Trump's education plan would undermine New York's neediest students

The Trump administration's proposed voucher plan could cripple 1,200 city schools.

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New Utrecht High School in Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn WARREN B./CREATIVE COMMONS

Donald Trump's campaign promise to pull billions of federal dollars out of public schools to pay for private vouchers would undermine the education of more than 700,000 New York students, according to an analysis by the United Federation of Teachers.

The UFT found that students at 1,200 schools across New York City would face larger class sizes, have fewer teachers and lose after-school academic and enrichment programs if Trump were to divest Title 1, legislation designed specifically to aid poor pupils.

"Congressional hearings are scheduled for this week for Betsy DeVos, the administration's nominee for U.S. Secretary of Education. We need to hear in detail from Ms. DeVos — a fervent advocate of vouchers and charter schools — what the administration's plan is for Title 1, which is specifically designed to aid poor pupils and which New York City relies on to help serve our neediest students," UFT President Michael Mulgrew stated in a news release.

The Trump campaign had gone on record supporting voucher programs but did not indicate a plan for funding; but because Congressional Republicans had previously proposed a change in federal law to allow states to use Title 1 funds for new purposes, defenders are concerned.

"If the school system had to make up a $500 million loss of Title 1 funds — money that helps defray the costs of teachers, guidance counselors, aides and administrators — more than these schools would suffer," Mulgrew asserted.

Vice President-elect Mike Pence has strongly backed Indiana's voucher program which proved to be an economic windfall for the primarily white charter schools.

Cell service, Wi-Fi launches in NYC subway stations ahead of schedule

Straphangers should now be able to tap into cellphone service and Wi-Fi at most underground subway stations in the city.

The cellphone launch, which includes coverage from AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile and Verizon Wireless, is one year ahead of schedule. The Wi-Fi installation was completed two years early.

"By bringing Wi-Fi and cell service underground ahead of schedule, we are reimagining our subway stations to meet the needs of the next generation," Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Thursday in a statement. "This will better connect New Yorkers who are on the go and build on our vision to reimagine the country's busiest transportation network for the future."

New Yorkers will now be able to call or text from most of the MTA's underground subway stations. GETTY IMAGES

The MTA entered into a 27-year partnership with Transit Wireless on the $300 million project that was installed without any additional costs to city taxpayers or straphangers, the governor's office said.

"As of Monday, our customers can text or call from our underground stations, staying in touch with their families, keeping up with work and staying connected," New York City Transit President Veronique Hakim said. "That's a major step forward for the MTA, and for our customers."

"Commuting and connectivity shouldn't be mutually exclusive, and the MTA recognizes that," Natalie Grybauskas, spokeswoman for Mayor Bill de Blasio, told Metro. "We're pleased that our city's underground is becoming more internet-accessible for New Yorkers on the go."

Subway riders still won't have Wi-Fi or cell service when riding between stations, however.

The underground initiative also includes high-tech security features, such as a public safety broadband network and more than 3,000 Help Point intercoms in 175 stations that allow instant access to 911 service and information. NIKKI M. MASCALI

BRIEF

Cuomo plugs for electric car charging stations along New York Thruway in State of the State proposals

One of Gov. Andrew Cuomo's more electrifying State of the State proposals is a plan to add more charging stations to New York roads in anticipation of more electric cars on New York roads.

The goal is to have 500 charging stations installed at workplaces, and 69 electric plug-in charging stations installed along the New York Thruway, a 570-mile highway which currently only has four charging stations.

The were 2,600 electric cars registered in New York state as of last year, DMV records show.

The initiative is part of Cuomo's pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent by 2030 from 1990 levels. No cost estimate was released at the time of the announcement Sunday.

"New York has adopted one of the most aggressive greenhouse gas reduction policies in the nation, and these continued investments in infrastructure supporting zero emission vehicles yis one more way to help reach these goals, reduce our carbon footprint and combat climate change," Cuomo said. "Additionally, increasing the availability of charging stations on the thruway will help ensure their availability in virtually every corner of the New York." AMANDA MIKELBERG

Electric car charging LIBBER/CREATIVE COMMONS

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Indian Point nuclear power plant in Buchanan, New York TONYTHEMISFIT/FLICKR

Reports: Indian Point nuke plant to shut down by 2021

Gov. Cuomo is expected to announce an agreement with the plant operators on Tuesday.

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Indian Point nuclear power plant, less than 30 miles from New York City, will close by April 2021 under an agreement New York State reached this week with the utility company that owns the plant, according to several news reports.

One of the reactors will permanently shut down by April 2020, followed by the rest of the plant, which sits on the east bank of the Hudson River, the following year.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who supports nuclear power plants in the upper region of the state, has long requested that the Westchester County plant cease operations.

"Why you would allow Indian Point to continue to operate defies common sense, planning and basic sanity," Cuomo said in June, The New York Times reported.

New York's Department of State said the Indian Point plant is in violation of state coastal management regulations and that it poses a risk to the 17 million people who live within 50 miles, The Wall Street Journal reported.

However, Cuomo hasn't confirmed the win for his administration.

"There is no agreement — Gov. Cuomo has been working on a possible agreement for 15 years and until it's done, it's not done," spokesman for the governor, Richard Azzopardi, said. "Close only counts for horseshoes, not for nuclear plants."

The governor is expected to make the announcement in his home county of Westchester on Tuesday, the New York Daily News reported.

The replacement for the energy the plant provides for New York City and Westchester County isn't clear; the power plant generates more than 2,000 megawatts — 25 percent of the region's electricity.

Cuomo previously suggested alternative power options, including power from nearby wind farms and hydropower from Quebec.

In 2015, Cuomo's administration opposed the 20-year recertification request by the plant's owner, Entergy, citing ecological concerns. The objection stated that the reactor, located near "two active seismic faults," kills marine life by using 2.5 billion gallons of water of day for cooling and puts drinking water at risk, according to the advocacy group Riverkeeper.

In his 2004 report "Chernobyl on the Hudson? The Health and Economic Impacts of a Terrorist Attack at the Indian Point Nuclear Plant," Edwin S. Lyman of the Union of Concerned Scientists "found that a core meltdown and radiological release at one of the two operating Indian Point reactors could cause 50,000 near-term deaths from acute radiation syndrome and 14,000 long-term deaths from cancer."

When asked if New York City's safety will be affected by the plant closure, Raul Contreras, a spokesman for Mayor Bill de Blasio, said, "The closing of Indian Point must be coupled with a clear understanding of the risks and impact its replacements will have on air quality, energy affordability and reliability."

A representative from Entergy told Metro on Saturday that the company has no comment at this time on the closure.

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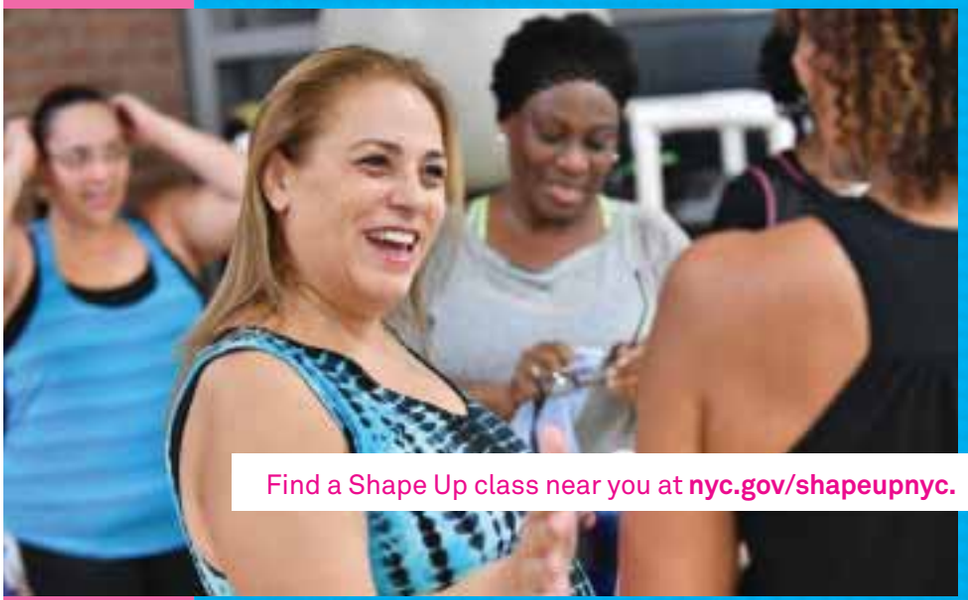

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Jamie Hook will host "The Hook" and public ironing events this month. PROVIDED

'Political speakeasy' debuts in Brooklyn

Live talk show "The Hook" kicks off Tuesday at Pete's Candy Store.

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In a time when people are arguably more divided politically, spiritually and creatively than ever before, one Brooklyn resident aims to bridge those gaps on the local level.

Jamie Hook will debut "The Hook," which he describes as a "political speakeasy" on Tuesday at Pete's Candy Store in Brooklyn. It was partly inspired by "Open City Dialogues," his lecture series that ran at Pete's from 2008 to 2012.

"It gave me a chance to do some 'community engineering' — taking your community, finding parts of it that are insurgent or dysfunctional, inspiring or disinspiring and working with them to better tune their community," Hook told Metro.

"The Hook," which is a live talk show and podcast, will kick off with City Councilman Stephen Levin, who represents New York's 33rd District and recently helped secure the final parcel of land for Bushwick Inlet Park.

"I think Councilman Levin is one of the great unsung heroes of this city," Hook said. "I've found him incredibly personable and a refreshing combination of idealistic and pragmatic. [At a recent event] he said a lot of people feel really disconnected from politics right now, and [to me], politics is the grandest form of community engineering of all."

Metro reached out to Levin for comment on his appearance on "The Hook," which promises to ask him burning questions about hope in politics, his college band and more, but had not heard back by press time.

With the divisive events of the past year, Hook wants people to think locally and step away from their computers or phones.

"Maybe our way to fight back isn't to pen endless comments on the internet about how much we disagree with things, but to collect in a room and to notice what's happening in our community, be inspired by it and go out and build it brick-by-brick," he said.

"The Hook" will start off as a monthly event, with the goal of eventually going weekly "if we find a way to enable it financially," Hook said.

The return of Hook's Iron Man

In addition to "The Hook," Jamie Hook is also resurrecting his act of public ironing — as in that oft-dreaded laundry task — on Tuesdays this month as part of Iron Man's Greenpoint Gratitude tour.

"It's a lighthearted version of community engineering," Hook said of the iron events. "I believe there are people out there like me who enjoy ironing and would do it as a public event."

What's the secret to a good iron?
The iron has to be heavy. A lot of people like a Teflon plate, but I like a steel plate. It's gotta have a really good steam function.

What's your least favorite household chore?
Emptying my cat's litter box.

You said that you reserve the right to refuse service. Have you refused anything?
No, but there was one person who brought a very difficult rayon shirt, and I had one of my apprentices on the board, and I kicked her off to iron it myself. Nobody's brought me a deal-breaker yet.

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Sen. Chuck Schumer GETTY IMAGES

Schumer demands audit of railroad sleep apnea testing

Last week's LIRR crash is the third to be attributed to the sleep disorder.

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Sens. Chuck Schumer and Kristin Gillibrand are calling for an audit of railroad companies' sleep apnea screening as the disorder is being blamed for the Long Island Rail Road train crash at Atlantic Terminal on Wednesday.

In a letter released Sunday, Schumer demanded federal transportation authorities provide a report of which railroad systems are actually testing its engineers for sleep apnea, a mandate he and Gov. Andrew Cuomo made in 2015. Schumer also called for increased safety reviews and the installation of inward facing cameras on MTA and New Jersey Transit trains.

"For years the NTSB has recommended sleep apnea testing, comprehensive fatigue risk management programs, and inward facing cameras and recently the Federal Railroad Administration, the key regulatory agency on this issue, took the important step of issuing Safety Advisories on both of these issues as well," the letter states.

The MTA had announced in April 2015 that it would institute sleep apnea testing at Metro North and its other agencies, including the LIRR.

Sleep apnea is a disorder in which a person's breathing is interrupted during sleep, and can result in poor rest. The required testing assesses an engineer's risk for sleep apnea by physical traits and can recommend further sleep tests for those deemed susceptible.

Three crashes in four years

Jan. 4, 2017: Long Island Rail Road, Brooklyn crash
Erratic speeds ranging from 2 to 15 mph in the moments leading to the impact of the train into the bumper at Atlantic Terminal was attributed to the operator's sleep apnea.

Sept. 29, 2016: New Jersey Transit Hoboken crash
Thomas Gallagher's undiagnosed sleep apnea was cited for the crash at Hoboken Terminal that killed 1 and injured more than 100.

Dec. 1, 2013: Metro-North, Spuyten Duyvil crash
A severe derailment in the Bronx that killed 4, injured 69, and nearly sank the commuter train in the Hudson River, was attributed to engineer William Rockefeller's severe sleep apnea.

BRIEF

Police: Cabbie rapes woman at knifepoint in Brooklyn
Police are searching for a cab driver who they say raped a woman at knifepoint in Brooklyn on Saturday.

The 29-year-old woman hailed a red minivan near Kensington in Brooklyn at 3 a.m. and asked to be driven to her home in Sunset Park. When they reached her residence, the driver pulled out a knife and demanded money, police said.

The woman handed over approximately $100. Before she could exit the vehicle, the driver entered the backseat and forced himself on her, investigators said. He then sped away in the minivan.

The woman walked to the 68th Precinct to report the attack. She was taken to a hospital for treatment and was released.

The man is described as 20-25 years old and driving a red minivan. There was no information as to what type of taxi or ride-hailing service was involved.

Brooklyn police are looking for a driver who raped his passenger. CREATIVE COMMONS

Anyone with information regarding the incident is asked to call the NYPD Crime Stoppers Hotline at 800-577-TIPS or for Spanish 1-888-57-PISTA (74782)

The public can also submit tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at nypdcrimestoppers.com or texting their tips to 274637 (CRIMES) then entering TIP577.

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Why Aren't Doctors Telling About These Two Often

Two Advanced Medical Treatments Every Knee Arthritis Sufferer

By *NY Pain MD*

***NY Pain MD* is a medical clinic with locations in Midtown NYC and Uptown NYC that has treated thousands of knee arthritis and joint pain patients.**

Here is what every knee arthritis sufferer should know about the best treatments and options available today. Including when and why you should consider each of these 2 treatment approaches to get maximum results.

If you suffer with knee or other join arthritis pain, you have probably already tried many treatments ... especially countless pain medications. Experienced doctors understand that, even though pain medications such as anti-inflammatory pain pills are part of the recommended early treatment plan for knee arthritis pain... they are rarely the answer over the longer term.

In most cases they have minimal results (if any) and have a laundry list of potential side effects. Some being serious and even life threatening.

Are There Any Better Options?

Thankfully, advancements in science and technology come extremely fast. And now there are two very good options for knee arthritis to help relieve the pain.

Two options that a lot of knee arthritis sufferers have never heard of.

Before we get into the two treatments, please understand this...

NY Pain MD is a well established medical clinic that has treated thousands of knee arthritis sufferers and joint and back pain sufferers. Patients travel from all over the area and even several states away from NYC to be treated at one of their clinics because they want the best medical treatments available. What you are about to discover are two REAL medical treatments. Not miracle cures you see on infomercials or non-medical treatments promoted on the internet.

Know this fact: There is no cure for arthritis. But there are these two treatments that have already helped thousands of knee arthritis sufferers - possibly just like you.

The first treatment is more common than the second. Even if you have heard of this treatment - or even tried it without good results - please read this. You will find out why it may not have worked for you and how you may be able to get much better results.

#1 Viscosupplementation

Viscosupplementation has gained quite a bit of popularity in recent years and it has gotten mixed results for a couple of reasons.

But before we get into that,here's what you need to know about viscosupplementation.

When you have arthritis, you suffer a decrease in the lubrication fluids in your knees.

In other words, your knee joints basically "dries up."

The lubricating fluid that decreases is called "synovial fluid." pharmaceutical companies (with the help of doctors) can now make ***natural*** synovial fluid gel-like compounds that, during viscosupplementation treatments. Doctors can precisely introduce directly into the knee and other joints.

This helps replace the lubricating fluid to the knee joint - allowing it to move more freely and smoothly and often decreasing or even eliminating the pain.

What Results Can Be Expected?

Like all medical treatments, the results vary and can not be predicted. But many knee arthritis sufferers get dramatic results. It is not uncommon for patients to either postpone knee replacement surgery for years... or even permanently cancel it.

But There Is A BIG Problem

The key is the treatment must be EXTREMELY PRECISE. If the procedure is slightly off, the medication will not get into the knee joint and the treatment will not work.

That's why the experts at ***NY Pain MD*** use Precision Arthritis Targeting Technology so they can actually see the lubricant going directly into the knee joint during the treatment.

Research shows that doctors performing joint injections without this technology can miss the joint as much as 30% of the time.

If you have tried viscosupplementation without this imaging technology without good results - this may be why.

That's why ***NY Pain MD*** takes it even one step further. They do not just use one step process of advanced imaging during treatment - they use two in their "double confirmation" process. This is to ensure patients get the best possible results.

Another Important Factor

Viscosupplementation medications also come in several different "brands" and chemical make-ups. Just like all medications, some people respond better to one than another. So, the experts at ***NY Pain MD*** use several and great effort is taken to figure out what is the best one for YOU.

One last thing: The experts at ***NY Pain MD*** have found that earlier you start Viscosupplementation the better.

This is most likely because the longer you wait - the more joint destruction takes place.

That's why ***NY Pain MD*** is now seeing so many patients as young as 35 to 40.

Summary: If you have knee arthritis pain and have not tried. Viscosupplementation you should look into it as soon as possible.

If you have tried it without good results. you may still be able to get great results with the proper imaging and specific medication.

What Should You Do If Viscosupplementation Fails?

When conservative treatment, including viscosupplementation fails ... most knee arthritis sufferers believe their only option is total knee replacement surgery.

This is not true...and here is why

There is another treatment for serious knee arthritis pain most people (and even doctors) do not know about.

#2: Radiofrequency Treatment

This treatment is technically called, "Radiofrequency Neurotomy." Or RF for short.

RF is a procedure that is based the theory that blocking the nerve supply to the painful area may alleviate pain and restore function.

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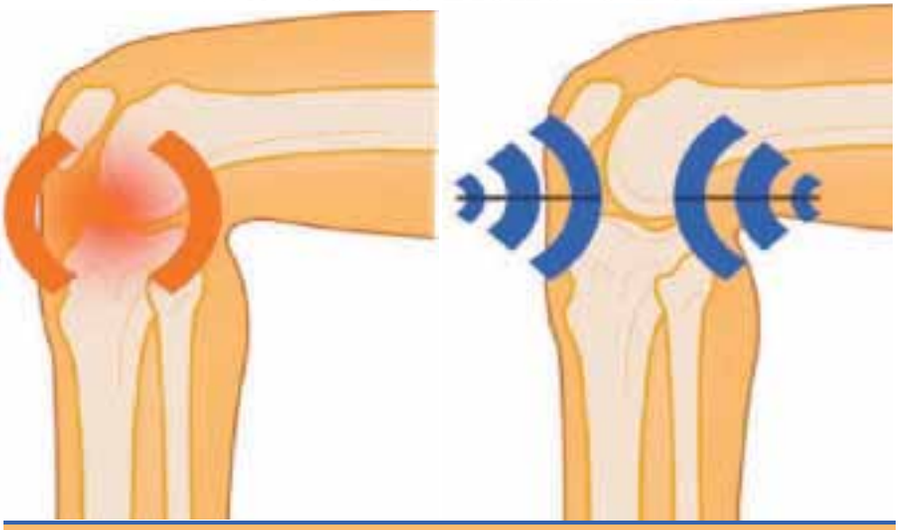
Knee Arthritis Sufferers Successful Treatments?

Needs To Know - Before Or After Knee Replacement Surgery

Advanced Treatment Uses Medical Radio Frequencies Waves To Relieve Pain



Science rescues knee arthritis sufferers?: **Radio Frequency Waves are used to block the nerve supply to the painful area and may alleviate pain and restore function to many. Many patients still in pain after a knee replacement may respond very well to these treatments allowing the possibility of avoiding additional surgery.**

Several branches of nerves that surround the knee are known as "genicular nerves."

Radiofrequency waves are delivered to the genicular nerves under advanced imaging to "block" the nerve from transmitting pain signals.

There are two distinct parts to this treatment. First, a test, diagnostic "G Block" procedure is done to determine if the procedure is going to decrease pain and improve function.

If this first "test" procedure is successful, then one to two weeks later, Radio Frequency waves are applied for term relief.

Is It Safe?

Research has shown this to provided significant relief for some patients. to procedure to be safe and effective.

One study published November 4, 2010 in the journal Pain found that RF treated subjects on average "achieved at least 50% knee pain relief at 1,4 and 12 weeks, respectively. No patient reported a post procedure adverse event during the follow-up period.

Some studies indiciate some patients may get years of relief in some cases. "RF neurotomy (radio frequency treatment) of genicular nerves leads to significant pain reduction and functional improvement in a subset of elderly chronic knee osteoarthritis pain, and thus may be an effective treatment in such cases."

It should also be mentioned that, like all procedures, results will vary patient to patient

Who Should Try This Treatment?

RF should be considered after other treatments, such as anti-inflammatory pain medication and viscosupplementation do not offer good enough results.

RF can be utilized before resorting to total knee replacement. RF allows many patients to avoid knee replacement surgery.

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The pain after a failed knee replacement surgery can be debilitating and this procedure can be the only thing that helps and give you relief.

What To Do Next If You Are In Pain

Here is the "X" factor many do not consider that might be the difference between you getting the best possible treatment or not.

Many experts suggest choosing a medical clinic that offers all these treatments and has the proper, most advanced technology all under one roof.

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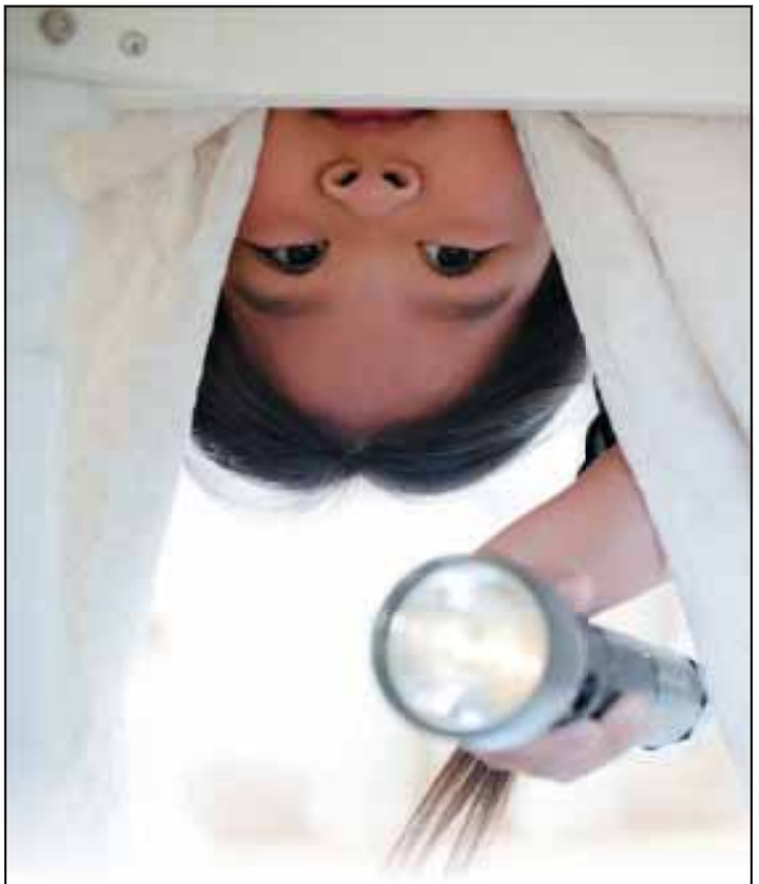

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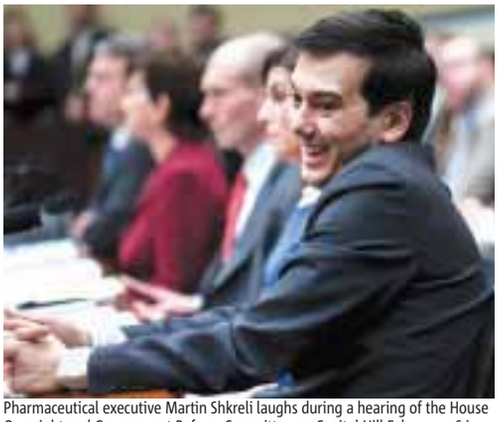
Shkreli suspended from Twitter for harassment

Shkreli, who is in his 30s, became known as the "pharma bro" after he taunted detractors who criticized him for increasing the price of the drug Daraprim.



Pharmaceutical executive Martin Shkreli laughs during a hearing of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee on Capitol Hill Feb. 4, 2016 in Washington, D.C. **GETTY IMAGES**

Former U.S. drug executive Martin Shkreli, dubbed the "pharma bro" and vilified for raising the price of a lifesaving drug by 5,000 percent, was suspended by Twitter on Sunday for harassing a female journalist.

Shkreli, a supporter of Republican President-elect Donald Trump, had dogged freelance reporter Lauren Duca, including sending her requests for dates, after she wrote an op-ed piece for Teen Vogue that was critical of Trump.

Shkreli, who caused controversy for hiking the price of an anti-parasitic drug to $750 a dose while head of Turing Pharmaceuticals LLC, had his Twitter account suspended for harassment, the San Francisco-based microblogging service said in an emailed statement.

After the suspension, Duca tweeted, "Why is harassment an automatic career hazard for a woman receiving any amount of professional attention?"

Duca had drawn media attention for her article in December arguing that Trump had conned U.S. voters. Shkreli then tweeted about trying to date her, and he sent her an invitation on Thursday to attend Trump's Jan. 20 inauguration as his guest.

Lauren Duca **FACEBOOK**

"I feel sick."
Duca wrote on Twitter

Duca replied on Twitter, "I would rather eat my own organs."

Shkreli later posted a collage of photos of Duca, and updated his profile picture with a photo of Duca and her husband showing Shkreli's face superimposed over that of her spouse.

Duca retweeted the pictures on Sunday, asking Twitter founder and Chief Executive Jack Dorsey why they were allowed on the social network. "I feel sick," she wrote.

Shkreli was forced to step down as Turing chief executive in 2015 amid criminal and civil securities fraud charges alleging he ran a Ponzi-like scheme while at the hedge fund MSMB Capital Management and while he was top executive at Retrophin Inc., another drug company.

Turing is the subject of antitrust probes by the Federal Trade Commission and the New York attorney general's office stemming from its increase in the Daraprim price. **REUTERS**

BRIEF

Massive storm hits western U.S. with rain, snow and ice

A powerful storm lashed California and other parts of the western United States on Sunday, bringing flooding and the risk of dangerous mudslides to a state that has struggled with drought for years.

As of late morning, the storm was dumping between one-half and three-quarters of an inch of rain per hour in parts of California and was set to continue for several hours, according to meteorologist Kenny James of the National Weather Service's Weather Prediction Center in Maryland.

In Oregon and parts of Washington State and Idaho, the storm was expected to bring ice through this evening, creating hazardous conditions.

James said the highest elevations of the Sierra Nevada mountain range in California could get 3 to 7 feet of snow by Monday.

In northern California, officials reported power outages and roads closed due to overflowing rivers. An "extreme" avalanche warning was issued for the Sierra Nevada range, which runs through the central and eastern part of the state.

The National Park Service said all roads to the valley in Yosemite National Park were closed because of expected flooding.

In Oregon, a men's basketball game between Gonzaga University and the University of Portland scheduled for Saturday night was postponed indefinitely, while the National Basketball Association's Portland Trailblazers postponed a home game against the Detroit Pistons from Saturday night to Sunday evening. **REUTERS**

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Senate to act this week on Obamacare repeal, McConnell says

Donald Trump has made clear he wants to move swiftly on his campaign pledge to repeal and replace the 2010 law.

The U.S. Senate will take its first steps toward repealing President Barack Obama's signature health care reform act by the end of the week, Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said on Sunday.

Speaking on CBS's "Face the Nation," McConnell said: "There ought not to be a great gap" between repealing the act and replacing it and that Republicans would be "replacing it rapidly after repealing it."

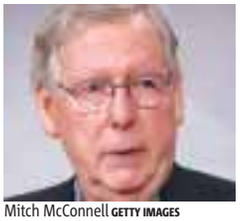
McConnell did not define what he meant by "rapidly." Another top Republican, House Majority Whip Steve Scalise, told Fox News that it could take two years to fully replace the Affordable Care Act, popularly known as Obamacare.

"I think everybody recognizes that there will be a transition period," Scalise said. "President-elect Trump and our leaders have said nobody is going to get the rug pulled out from underneath them."

Scalise cited a previously proposed Repubprocedural rule that would make it harder for Democrats to impede progress on such legislation.

Repealing the act without an immediate replacement raises the question as to what happens to those who have insurance under Obamacare.

On ABC's "This Week," Obama said that while the law could theoretically be repealed, "suddenly 20 million people or more don't have health insurance."



Mitch McConnell GETTY IMAGES

"I think Republicans now are recognizing that may not be what the American people, including even Trump voters, are looking for," he said.

The health care law extended insurance coverage to millions of Americans through an expansion of the Medicaid program for the poor and the creation of online exchanges where consumers can shop for private health insurance coverage. The law also provides for subsidies to help individuals and families afford coverage purchased on the exchanges. REUTERS

THE LONG GOODBYE

TOM FOREMAN
Opinion

CNN's Tom Foreman is the author of the book "My Year of Running Dangerously." @tomforemancnn

With the inauguration closing in fast, we're going to get nothing but Trump, Trump, Trump pretty soon. But right now Washington is saying so long to the outgoing administration. So grab a box and help load the vans: Here are my three things to watch this week in politics.

1. SWEET HOME CHICAGO

Maybe you loved the way Barack Obama ran the White House; maybe he left you all "meh"; but few folks dispute his skills as a speechmaker. Accordingly, you can expect loads of breathless coverage during his big goodbye speech Tuesday in his home city of Chicago. (Well, he's going to keep living in D.C. for now, but still …) All signs say he'll thank his supporters for eight years in office, and underscore the progress under his administration. But beyond nostalgia, what will be the headline? Considering the increasingly chilly relations with the incoming administration, watch for him to use his last stand at the bully pulpit to fire some serious shots at Team Trump.

2. SHIP OF STATE

Speaking of speeches, on the same day Hillary Clinton will emerge from the hibernation of her electoral defeat for a speech at the place she used to run — the State Department. She'll be there to dedicate a new exhibition hall bearing her name, and like President Obama, to gush about the good old days for the Dems. Don't look for her to throw heavy punches at the incoming president — she had her chance at that — but some quick digs? Wouldn't be surprised.

3. WELCOME WAGON

And what will Republicans be doing during all of this? Well, they won't be crying. Instead, watch for Congress members, lobbyists and all manner of favor-seekers to flood the zone along Pennsylvania Avenue. A lot of them did not like Donald Trump when he was running, and they may not trust him now, but they know the minute he steps into the Oval Office it will be better to be his friend than his enemy.

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BRIEF

Google shows improved self-driving system in Chrysler Pacifica

Google unveiled its latest self-driving system in a Chrysler Pacifica minivan during a Sunday preview ahead of the Detroit auto show, saying the technology is more reliable and affordable.

The announcement came from John Krafcik, head of Google's Waymo unit, whose search for partners to develop and install the company's autonomous driving technology into real cars has so far yielded only an alliance with Fiat Chrysler Automobiles and a pending deal with Honda Motor Co.

Headlining a future mobility conference during the show's media preview, Krafcik said Waymo's latest set of self-driving hardware and software incorporated a new array of sensors, including an enhanced vision system, improved radar and laser-based lidar, all developed and built in-house.

Krafcik said Waymo had reduced the cost of a single lidar unit by 90 percent, to about $7,500. Among major outside suppliers of this technology, Velodyne Lidar Inc and Quanergy Systems Inc both have said they are developing smaller solid-state lidar units that eventually would cost $200 or less. REUTERS

Paris boosts cycling

Paris plans a major boost to its cycling infrastructure and will ban cars from outside the Louvre museum as it steps up its fight against traffic pollution, the mayor said on Sunday.

Socialist mayor Anne Hidalgo announced a new two-way 4 kilometre bike lane to run along the Rue de Rivoli, a major east-west thoroughfare and one of the city's most famous streets, and to connect the Place de la Bastille and Place de la Concorde.

She also said Paris will accelerate a plan to double the surface of its cycling lanes by 2020.

The noisy and polluted Rue de Rivoli, which links major landmarks like the Louvre Museum, Palais Royal and the historic Marais area, would become an area for walking, cycling and shopping, where the space for cars will be halved.

The city will also ban private cars from the his-

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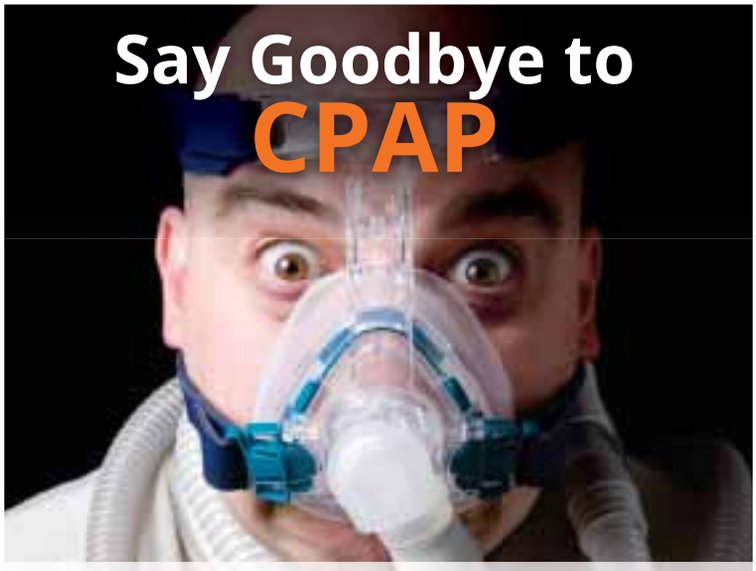

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infrastructure

A man rides a bicycle across the Trocadero Esplanade in front of the Eiffel Tower at sunrise. GETTY IMAGES

"Climate is the No. 1 priority. Less cars means less pollution. 2017 will be the year of the bicycle."
Hidalgo

torical Place du Carrousel du Louvre, which cuts through the Tuileries park and the square in front of the Louvre, the world's most visited museum with about nine million visitors per year.

Paris this year plans to pedestrianize most of the Marais by limiting car traffic there to residents, public transport and local businesses.

From 2018, Paris will also start operating a new "tram-bus" along the right bank of the Seine to boost public transport infrastructure as part of its bid for the 2024 Olympics.

Deputy mayor in charge of transport Christophe Najdovski said cities like Bordeaux and Lyon are way ahead of Paris in terms of reopening access to their riverbanks and banning polluting diesel cars from the city centre, as Tokyo has done.

"We have a lot of work left to do, as is obvious from the numerous days with peak pollution levels at the end of 2016," Najdovski said.

In September, Paris turned a stretch of highway on the right bank of the river Seine into a pedestrian zone in an attempt to reduce pollution despite fierce protests from drivers and the conservative opposition.

In the past 15 years, private car traffic in Paris has fallen by about 30 percent as the city introduced its popular Velib bicycle sharing scheme and its Autolib electric vehicle sharing scheme, city authorities said.

REUTERS

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Fallon leads a way-too-nice Golden Globes

But at least we got Viola Davis and "Atlanta" wins, plus an instant classic Hugh Laurie speech.

MATT PRIGGE
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matt.prigge@metro.us

Jimmy Fallon would probably like to host the Oscars. For now he'll have to settle for hosting this year's Golden Globes. GETTY IMAGES

The Golden Globes, as everyone knows, are the "fun Oscars." It's the awards show that's less important than the Academy Awards. There's less of those literal show-stopping montages. It mixes movies and TV. It's the one where the hosts are mean, especially if they're Ricky Gervais. There's booze.

This year saw a bit of a change-up. Instead of someone like Gervais insulting Bruce Willis and Robert Downey Jr., we got the guy who playfully ran his hands through the fox that sits atop our president-elect's head. Jimmy Fallon took the stage at this year's Globes, bringing his brand of harmless, sanitized fun to a show that's best when it has claws.

Despite his shameful normalization last year of our incoming fearless leader, our host's opening monologue still boasted no fewer than three Trump disses. He called the Globes "one of the only places left in America that still honors the popular vote." He also — not inaccurately — quipped that "Manchester by the Sea" was "the most depressing thing from 2016 that wasn't 2016."

The awards themselves got off to a bumpy start. Instead of big favorite Mahershala Ali winning the supporting actor trophy for "Moonlight," he lost to Aaron Taylor-Johnson and his Foghorn Leghorn Southern accent in "Nocturnal Animals."

Things picked up, though. As far as surprises go, there was "Atlanta" triumphing over "Veep," "Transparent," "Mozart in the Jungle" and (again) "Blackish" by nicking Best Comedy Series. Co-creator/co-star Donald Glover delivered a humble speech, in which he admitted of his unusual program, "We didn't think anyone was going to like this show."

Also nice: the lovable Tracee Ellis Ross winning for "Blackish" over the considerable powerhouse of Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Rachel Bloom, Gina Rodriguez and more. Paul Verhoeven's "Elle" won for foreign language film, despite being a movie (about a woman, played by Isabelle Huppert, who's raped) that no one feels comfortable seeing.

Viola Davis won for her performance in "Fences," Denzel Washington's film of August Wilson's legendary play. Her speech was predictably awesome, yet even better was her intro to Meryl Streep, who was honored with the Cecil B. DeMille Award for a lifetime of greatness. Streep didn't hold back; she spent much of it holding back tears over the monster about to take office.

The award for best speech should go to Hugh Laurie, one of the best awards speech givers ever. Nabbing yet another trophy, this time for "The Night Manager," the "House" alum cracked, "I'll be able to say I won this at the last ever Golden Globes." Referring to his arms dealer character on the show, he added, "I accept this award on behalf of psychopathic billionaires everywhere."

It wouldn't be an awards show without predictable wins, though. "La La Land" netted trophies for Ryan Gosling, screenplay, its score and the song "City of Stars." (Gosling's speech, largely dedicated to singing the praises of Eva Mendes, won't kill his "hey girl" dreamboat image any time soon.)

Zootopia" beat out the superior "Kubo and the Two Strings" for animated film. Sarah Paulson added a Golden Globe to her pile of trophies for her turn as Marcia Clark in "The People v. O.J.: American Crime Story," which also took the award for best limited series or TV movie.

As far as random miscellany, Goldie Hawn acted epically batty while presenting an award alongside her future "Snatched" co-star Amy Schumer. The upside to Jimmy Fallon hosting was it meant Questlove spinning killer jams (ESG!) in between awards. And the Internet nearly melted when a dreamily shaggy-haired Dev Patel showed up onstage with his pint-sized "Lion" co-star Sunny Pawar to basically stand there and look devastatingly adorable.

Glam at the 2017 Golden Globes

To read our complete Golden Globes coverage, including show recap and big winners visit **metro.us**

Emma Stone makes princess dressing cool in a blush Valentino gown with stars. Swoon.

Kathryn Hahn ditched the typical dress for a sleek suit and bra. We love.

No Olivia Pope white for Kerry Washington. The actress shone in a gold Dolce & Gabbana dress.

Well hello, Mandy Moore. The actress wore a Naeem Khan gown with plunging neck — a big trend of the night.

Not only did Tracee Ellis Ross sparkle during her uplifting best actress speech, she wore a diamond on every finger.

Reese Witherspoon might have been channeling her look from the 2007 Globes but we think she looks even better 10 years later. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

3 Ways to start your week

Attend the Society for the Advancement of Social Studies free monthly lecture Tuesday at The Bedford in Williamsburg. NATE BOGUSZEWSKI

Our event picks for Monday Jan. 9-Wed. Jan 11

KATE MOONEY
@yatinbrooklyn
kate.mooney@metro.us

It's cooollld outside. No better way to get through the winter than to stock your calendar with events—indoor. Here are three (inside) activities to warm your week.

Plan B (The Welcome to 2017 show) at KGB Bar

Hosted by Ariana Seigel (IFC, TruTV), this progressive comedy night features standup from the likes of Winter Miller ("Full Frontal With Samantha Bee") and Andrea Martin ("Difficult People"). Entry is donation-based, with all proceeds benefiting the Abortion Care Network (ACN). Fun fact: Actual Plan B will be raffled off.
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January Lecture: Unsung Heroines of History at The Bedford

Continue the female-empowerment vibes Tuesday at The Society for the Advancement of Social Studies' free monthly lecture, which highlights under-the-radar historical women from little-known Renaissance artists to the perennially undervalued Virginia Woolf.
Tuesday, Jan. 10,
7:30 p.m.,
110 Bedford Ave.

"The Big Lebowski" at Brooklyn Bazaar

F—k it dude, it's Wednesday night; why not attend a free screening of the Coen Brothers' stoner classic? View the film in the Bazaar's Main Ballroom while enjoying drinks and bites from the venue's bar and on-site restaurant, The Brooklyn Star.
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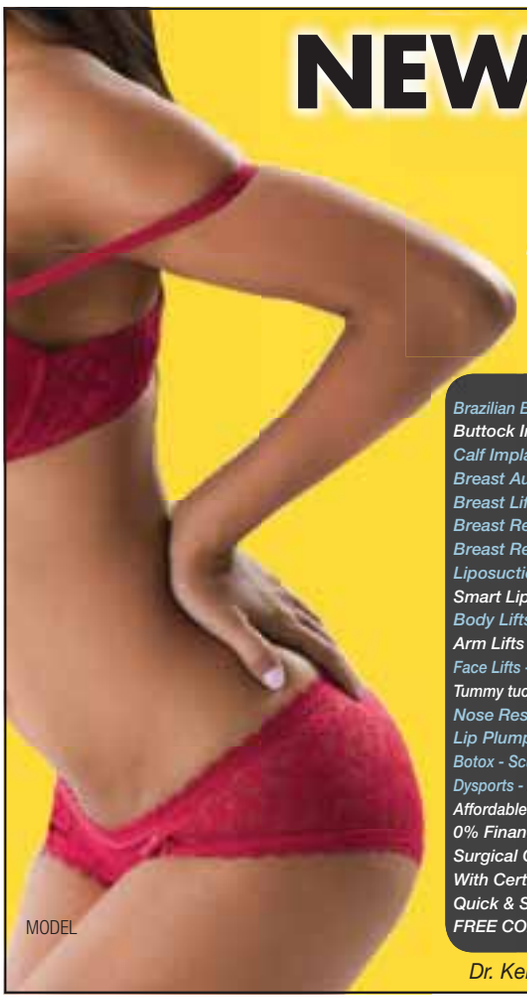
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Kate Beckinsale kicks butt once more

With the new "Underworld," the actress finds herself back in the role she's played since 2003.

Lucia Hernandez
@MetroNew York
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Last year, Kate Beckinsale earned raves for playing Lady Susan, the scheming, quipping heroine of the Jane Austen romp "Love & Friendship." Now she's already back on action movie detail. In "Underworld: Blood Wars," the English actress once again reprises her role as Selene, the "death dealer" battling both vampires and werewolves (OK, "lycans"). This round she finds herself at the center of a plot to steal her blood. It's Beckinsale's fifth go as Selene, having merely filed a cameo in the third installment, "Rise of the Lycans," in 2009.

Beckinsale, 43, talks to us about not bearing tired of her most famous character, getting in shape and welcoming a female director to the franchise.

GETTY IMAGES

This is the franchise's fifth installment. What was it like to still be playing Selene?
It's been quite a few years, so it is not like I get tired of it. We have done a few movies but over quite a long period of time. It's particularly nice that we have people from the beginning; it's a little bit like a little family getting back together.

Do you have to prepare physically for this role?
There is a lot of physical activity going on. You want to step up your workout so you have stamina and flexibility. I did a lot of yoga to make sure I didn't get injured during it. And then of course learning all the fight choreography takes a long time, so there is a lot of training.

How was it filming that epic ice battle?
It wasn't really ice, but it was still very cold because it was December in Prague. So it felt very much like it could have been ice, to be honest. But it was interesting because you had to do things in slightly smaller segments because it was a massive long epic fight. So with those ones it is really interesting to get to see the movie at the end and see how it all fits together.

What has Selene taught you over the years?
She taught me not to run like a girl, and how to throw punches. [Laughs] That's it, really.

"Underworld: Blood Wars," in theaters Jan. 6, is the fifth time Kate Beckinsale has played Selene, "death dealer" of vampires and lycans alike. LARRY HORRICKS

A woman behind the camera

What was it like working with Anna Foerster, the series' new director?
We always have a new director, so I'm quite used to it. The difference this time was that it was a female director, which felt very appropriate for the series. It felt like it was time to have that. And I feel very passionate about that.

Was her approach to your character different to that of a male director?
We had never had female werewolves. Maybe the male directors didn't think they were cute enough. [Laughs] She really wanted to do little things like that. But to be honest, having not met her as a man, I don't know what qualities are hers and what qualities are hers as a female. She came with a lot of visual ideas.

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Kidney stones

Kidneys are a body part you probably don't think about often, if ever. They're inside, doing their job of removing waste and regulating your body's salt, acid and potassium levels, among other things.

But if something painful happens to your kidneys — like kidney stones — you'll never forget them. Kidney stones are unfortunately common, and their numbers are growing: According to the National Institutes of Health, about 11 percent of American men and 6 percent of American women will have kidney stones at some point in their lives. We talked to Dr. Mantu Gupta, a urologist and director of the Kidney Stone Center at Mount Sinai Health System, to find out the causes and treatment options for kidney stones.

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Stay Healthy

You have medical questions? We have answers. Metro is teaming up with the experts at the esteemed Mt. Sinai hospital to provide answers to New Yorkers' most pressing medical concerns. Send us an email at askmtsinai@metro.us. We'll select one question and publish an answer every other week.

What are kidney stones and who's at risk?

Kidney stones are an accumulation of mineral deposits that form into a stone, [looking] like a pebble in a river or a piece of rock. Most people have a tendency to make stones because they absorb more oxalate [a component found in food like spinach] from the foods they're eating than most people, or they're absorbing more calcium. Dietary factors, of course, play an important role, but usually most people aren't eating excessive calcium or oxalate. It's just the way their body is metabolizing it.

What are the warning signs?

Stones are known as "the great mimickers." People have been misdiagnosed as having appendicitis when they actually had a kidney stone in the right ureter (the ureter and the appendix are near each other). Even though the classic symptom is pain on the flank area, the pain can go down to the groin, to the testicle in men and the ovary in females, and cause burning upon urination when it gets close to the bladder.

If you've had them once, are you likely to get them again?

Yeah, general statistics are, if you've had a kidney stone, there's a 50 percent chance you'll have another one in the next four years.

What are some preventive steps you can take?

Avoiding excessive animal proteins is important. Most kidney stones tend to form in an acidic environment, and most nonvegetarians have relatively acidic urine. It's because animal proteins are a good source for sulfur, which is viewed by the kidney as an acid. Cut back on salt and increase your fluids [to at least 60 to 80 ounces of fluid a day minimum]. SHEILA DOUGHERTY

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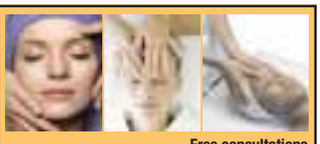
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3 New classes for the new year

Learn French, photography and programming in NYC.

KATE MOONEY
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Ah, the new year, that time when we feel anything is possible. While you're high on that *new year, new you* optimism, here are three upcoming classes that will help you pick up a new skill and keep that momentum going through the winter.

1 Photography 101

Make 2017 the year you graduate from iPhone selfies to DSLR portraits. At Brooklyn Brainery, Prospect Heights' continuing-education hub, this three-session introduction to picture-taking course will get you set on the basics of composition, lighting and exposure. Best of all, it will give you something to look forward to on Monday nights.

Brooklyn Brainery
190 Underhill Ave.
Jan. 30, Feb. 6, Feb. 13
6 p.m.-8 p.m.
$85, brooklynbrainery.com

2 French Essentials

Whether you're planning to move to Canada after Trump takes office or you're gearing up for a summer in Nice, this three-month class promises to have you making conversation *en francais* within weeks. Small class sizes and custom materials provided by Fluent City will help you along.

Fluent City
Jan. 23-April 17
24 sessions
Locations and times vary
$699, fluentcity.com

3 Programming for Non-Programmers Bootcamp

Instead of spending Inauguration Weekend moping, do something useful, like, say, adding a new skill to your résumé. These two day-long, immersive sessions will teach you web development and coding basics, from HTML to JavaScript to CSS, so you'll be building your own site in no time—or at the very least, be able to talk the lingo.

General Assembly
Jan. 21-Jan. 22, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
$525, generalassemb.ly

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The New Muslims Program

The New Muslims Program is a six-week program designed to help new Muslim converts learn the basics of Islamic faith. Students will learn the absolute essentials of how to practice the five pillars of Islam, and receive guidance and support while making Islam part of their daily lives.

Starts: Saturday, January 21st, 1:15-4:15pm
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3 Student loan resolutions for 2017

Make getting out of debt a priority.

NerdWallet is a personal finance website.

People make New Year's resolutions with the best of intentions, but odds are slim that they'll pan out.

You can buck that trend by creating resolutions that are specific and attainable. If you're trying to accomplish something big, like getting out of student loan debt, these factors are even more important.

"The clients that have the most success are the ones who don't ignore the problem. They come up with an aggressive but doable plan," says Mark Struthers, a Minnesota-based certified financial planner.

Here are three attainable student loan resolutions for 2017.

1 Calculate your payoff date

Figuring out the exact month and year when you'll be free of your student-loan debt is a strong motivator to keep paying it off. The typical 10-year loan term can feel pretty abstract, but knowing you'll be debt-free in, say, March 2027, might inspire you to reach that goal even more quickly.

To find your payoff date, log into your loan accounts with your student loan servicer. Note the amount you owe, as well as your interest rates and monthly payments. Then plug those numbers into a payoff calculator to find out how many years of payments you have left and how much interest you'll owe.

Once you know the exact month and year you'll finish paying off your loans, create a loan-paydown plan. You might choose to pay more than the minimum each month to get out of debt faster; if so, specify how the extra funds should be added to your account by sending your servicer a letter or email. You can make those extra dollars work even harder by targeting your highest-interest loans first — that will cut down on the interest you'll pay overall.

2 Switch up your debt management strategy

Make 2017 the year you stop staring down your student-loan balance at the exclusion of other financial goals.

To save the most money, prioritize your debts by interest rate. Credit cards and personal loans, for example, usually carry higher rates than student loans, so they cost more, long-term. It might be tempting to throw any extra cash at your student loans, but it might not make the most financial sense. And your financial plan needs to look beyond debt if you want to successfully manage your money.

"None of your finances should be looked at in a vacuum," says Scott Hanson, a Sacramento, California, certified financial planner.

Carve out room for emergency-fund savings and retirement contributions when creating your budget. Thanks to the power of compound interest, you don't have to build any of these savings overnight. But that's also why it's important to start saving for retirement as soon as you can and why you should max out a 401(k) match if one is available to you. You'll be thankful for the free money later on.

3 Make your loans fit your budget

Having trouble affording your loans? Want to free up money for long-term savings? Lowering your payments can help keep your student debt from overwhelming all else.

If you can't afford payments on your federal loans, look into income-driven repayment plans. If you qualify, your payments will be capped at a percentage of your income and your loan term will be extended to 20 to 25 years; you'll be forgiven any leftover balance after that time and it will be taxed as income. Deferment and forbearance can both provide a temporary reprieve from private loan payments. Explain your situation to your lender to find the best option.

If you can afford your payments but want to save money on your loans, look into student-loan refinancing. If you qualify, you'll trade your existing loan for a new one with different terms, such as a lower interest rate and payment amount. You'll need a steady income, a low debt-to-income ratio and a credit score at or above 690.

If you don't know your score, use NerdWallet's credit-score tool.

DEVON DELFINO

‘Startup’ your career in the new year

Anna Akbari tells us how to shake things up in 2017.

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When Anna Akbari received her Ph.D. in sociology in 2008, she felt like she was on top of the world. And then the Great Recession began.

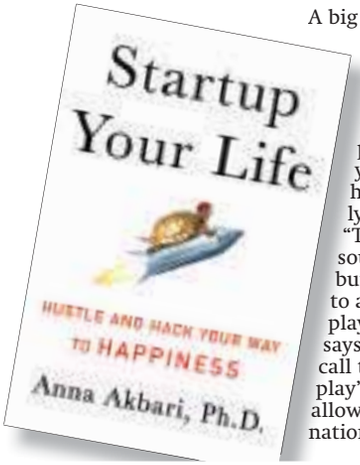
“As a lot of people did, I became acutely aware that the system that we had become used to seeing as a security blanket wasn’t something that we could rely on,” says Akbari, the author of the book “Startup Your Life: Hustle and Hack Your Way to Happiness.” “We really had to individually be a little scrappy and reinvent the system.”

With many readers having career-related New Year’s resolutions on the brain, we asked Akbari for her tips on how to have a transformative 2017.

For author Anna Akbari, new hobbies and projects are also untapped skill development opportunities. ALL PHOTOS CREDIT PROVIDED

Think like a visionary

The trick to creating meaningful change is to begin disrupting your work routine long before it is necessary to do so. “Too often we think of change as something that is thrust upon us in moments of crisis,” explains Akbari. “Instead, we should adopt an always-changing mind-set so that we are nimble and constantly adapting and growing.”



Simple ways of doing that include taking time to learn new skills, keeping up with how your industry is changing and being open to new positions, even when you aren’t actively looking.

Embrace the creative

A big part of getting ready to make a career change is opening your eyes to possibilities you may not have previously considered. “This might sound strange, but I tell people to always find play outlets,” says Akbari. “I call this ‘serious play’ because it allows your imagination to run free and allows you to stay in touch with things that really make you happy.”

Building time for creative projects into your week will also permit you to see how to get back in touch with talents you may not have used in a while. “Play is often left off our to-do lists, but it’s important to integrate because of the benefits,” she says.

Accept failure

Throughout her book, Akbari stresses the need to accept failure and the occasional misstep as regular parts of life. “To be able to successfully pivot, you need to accept that failure will happen and that failure is good for growth,” says Akbari. “When failure inevitably comes your way it is an opportunity for you to actively self-reflect.”

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The Packers' Hail Mary toss to end the first half set the tone for the second, with the Giants defense struggling to slow down Aaron Rodgers. GETTY IMAGES

3 Things we learned as Giants falter in Green Bay, end their season

The Packers advance to face the Cowboys, while the Giants will try and figure out what went wrong.

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The New York Giants are one and done in the playoffs, all the talk about how this team was poised for another run through the wild card to the Super Bowl now just talk. The Green Bay Packers overcame a slow start to beat the Giants, 38-13.

Now including the regular season, Green Bay has won seven straight games.

It started off well for the Giants as two Robbie Gould field goals staked the Giants to a 6-0 lead by the midpoint of the second quarter, Big Blue's defense strong as the Packers were forced to punt on their first five possessions. But on their sixth possession, Green Bay took advantage of a short field to go 38 yards in just three plays, with quarterback Aaron Rodgers finding wide receiver Davante Adams in tight coverage for what would become a 7-6 lead for Green Bay.

Then on a heave at the end of the first half, the Packers took a 14-6 lead when Rodgers almost miraculously found Randall Cobb for a 42-yard touchdown. The ball somehow fell to Cobb through a sea of Giants players while staying in bounds.

On their first three possessions, the Packers had just 22 yards of total offense but the offense was clearly just getting warmed up. Rodgers finished 25-for-40 for 362 yards and four touchdowns.

With 9:19 left in the fourth quarter, Green Bay went up for good when Rodgers found Cobb again, this time 19 yards for a 31-13 lead.

Three things we learned from the Giants in the wild card:

1 The defense made some big plays

Down 3-0 late in the first quarter, a pass moved the chains 32 yards, putting the Packers in field goal territory and a fresh set of downs. But then the Giants defense stood tall, a Coty Sensabaugh sack of Aaron Rodgers for an 11-yard loss setting the tone, forcing a punt. It was a big moment for the Giants, who allowed just seven yards of actual offense from Green Bay in the first quarter. Sensabaugh had that sack and then got a fingertip on Rodgers' third-down pass the next play, keeping Green Bay out of range to tie the game.

Then with the Giants up 6-0 in the second quarter, some tremendous downfield coverage forced Rodgers into intentional grounding, again knocking Green Bay out of field goal range. Late in the third quarter, Sensabaugh also made a big deflection in the back of the end zone on a pass intended for Cobb. The play forced the Packers to settle for a field goal. The defense made some big plays but consistently working with short fields, it was too much of a tall task.

And on a day when the offense managed just one touchdown, the defense kept things close until the fourth quarter.

2 Big sack numbers, little else

It was feast or famine for the Giants pass rush, who got to Rodgers with some effectiveness (to the tune of three sacks in the first half and five in the game) but then struggled for long stretches to create pressure. They also had some difficulty in their gap assignments, in particular in the second half when Green Bay began to establish the run. The sack numbers were big for the Giants but they struggled to find their way into the backfield.

With Janoris Jenkins missing from early in the game with an injury and fellow cornerback Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie banged up, the Giants needed more than just big plays, they needed consistency from their defensive line.

For the first time since the season's first six weeks, the Giants didn't get that from the defensive line, and they needed dominance in the pass rush to have a chance to win.

3 Eli doesn't deliver

The hype all week was that Eli Manning would become elite after a tough regular season,
in particular the final four games where he threw four touchdowns and as many interceptions.

Manning didn't get picked off in this game until late in the fourth quarter and his numbers were rather fine (23-for-44 for 299 yards, one touchdown and one interception) but the offense managed just one touchdown. That falls on him.

He wasn't the game changer under center that the Giants expected or needed and they're going home early in part because he didn't make the big plays when the Giants offense was driving. He surely wasn't helped by an offensive line that was miserable all game long, but Manning didn't make the big throw needed as the Packers offense began to click.

NFL Elite Eight matchups set

Some fantastic battles will commence during the second week of NFL playoff action.

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The Patriots will enter their Saturday match against the Texans as the biggest playoff favorites, 16 points, since 1998. GETTY IMAGES

We lost the four weakest links this weekend, as the NFL playoffs continue onward toward Super Bowl LI. The four divisional round games are much stronger and more enticing than the wild card weekend slate, which saw a few too many back up quarterbacks struggle in blowout decisions.

Here's a brief look ahead at next week's Elite Eight matchups and the respective schedule for each:

NFC No. 3 Seattle at No. 2 Atlanta, Saturday at 4:35 p.m. Fox

The Seahawks were led by a dominant run game in their wild card victory over the feeble Lions, but the convincing victory served as a good tune up for a team that has been a bit inconsistent during the regular season.

Thomas Rawls looked agile and elusive netting 161 rushing yards and opened up Russell Wilson and the Seattle air attack. Their running game will look to keep it up in another controlled environment in Atlanta, against a Falcons team that is not particular tough on the run, allowing 104.5 yards per game (17th in the NFL).

But run defense isn't Atlanta's tune — their aerial attack is. The Falcons have the third best passing game in the NFL, led by MVP candidate Matt Ryan and his favorite weapon Julio Jones. Seattle's defense has allowed the third fewest yards per game, and has a killer secondary led by Cam Chancellor and Richard Sherman.

AFC No. 4 Houston at No. 1 New England, Saturday at 8:15 p.m. CBS

The Patriots were really bailed out when Raiders quarterback (and another viable MVP candidate) Derek Carr was injured and knocked out for the postseason in Week 16. They were able to sit back and prepare for the winner of the elite battle between rookie Connor Cook and Texans' underachieving QB Brock Osweiler.

Not surprisingly, neither was much of a factor as the Texans top-ranked defense lifted Houston to a second-round berth. The Patriots will welcome back to town former assistant Bill O'Brien and a bevy of other players with New England connections in the second meeting between the two teams (the Pats won 27-0).

Even if the Texans defense plays as well as it did last Saturday against the Raiders, they'll be hard-pressed to score enough points on offense to keep up with Tom Brady — fresh off a regular season with the best touchdown-to-interception ratio of all time (28-2).

AFC No. 3 Pittsburgh at No. 2 Kansas City, Sunday at 1:05 p.m. NBC

The Steelers looked simply dominant in their 30-12 all-around win against the over-matched Dolphins Sunday afternoon, but without home field advantage and up against the well-rested Chiefs in Kansas City, it could be quite the test.

Ben Roethlisberger was able to get the ball to LeVeon Bell and Antonio Brown in space (whether via handoff or short pass) to allow them to score two touchdowns apiece. The Chiefs will spend most of their effort on defense controlling the ball on offense, and keeping the ball out of the hands of Pittsburgh's elite skill players. He did, however, leave the game with an injury late. It's severity is yet unknown.

The Chiefs have been tested often in the best conference in football, the AFC West and entered the postseason fresh off dominating wins against the Broncos and Chargers.

NFC No. 4 Green Bay at No. 1 Dallas, at 4:40 p.m. Fox

The last of the favorites won Sunday night, as the Packers came alive in the second half to thoroughly dominate New York, 38-13 and advance to face the Cowboys in what is a dream match up for the NFL.

It would be hard to argue that any quarterback not named Aaron Rodgers is playing the best in the world right now, and Rodgers and the red hot Packers — winners of seven straight now — could be just the team to upset the NFC's No. 1 overall seeded Cowboys.

Dallas is of course led by rookie sensations Ezekiel Elliott and Dak Prescott, and their high powered offense (thanks to the best offensive line in football) helped them dominate the NFC all year. But if any unit can take advantage of the Cowboys' weaknesses it's the Green Bay offense.

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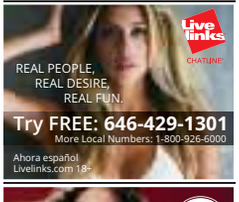

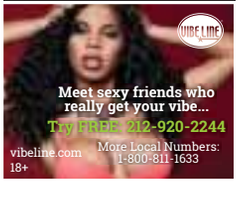

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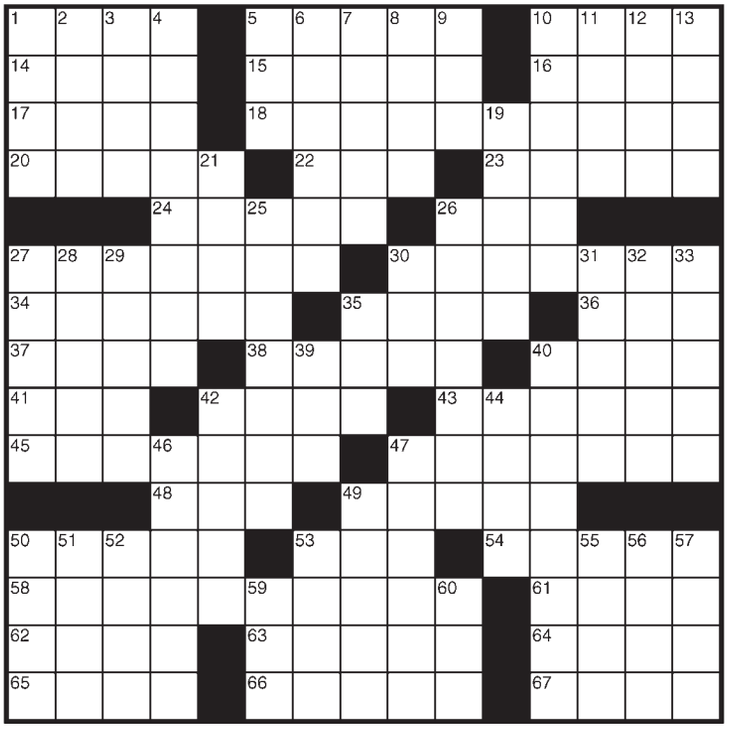

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7		2					5	
	3			5				
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4		9	1	7	3	2		5
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hard

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		1			2		3	7
	2			3	4	1		
		3	6	1				

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Don't just think about change, make it happen. Gather information and prepare well in order to get the best results. A window of opportunity must not be ignored.

Taurus Learn as you go. Ask questions and be hesitant to make an important decision or move without following through with a thorough investigation.

Gemini Remain levelheaded. Refuse to let your emotions take control. Make honesty and integrity priorities, regardless of what others do. Protect your position and future.

Cancer You must set things up the way you want them without drawing attention. Avoiding interference will allow you to accomplish much. Be creative.

Leo Playful interactions with family and co-workers will result in popularity. Don't let your health suffer due to excess stress or high-strung emotions.

Virgo Activities that will keep you motivated and busy are favored. Family events or romantic plans will help distract you from life's little setbacks.

Libra Look at all the angles before you make a choice. A short trip or meeting will give you something to think about. Change begins within. Learn from experience.

Scorpio Concentrate on personal plans and engage in projects that you can do alone. Walk away if someone tries to use guilt to part you from your hard-earned cash.

Sagittarius Taking precautions will be in your best interest when dealing with partnerships. Avoid making unrealistic promises. Stick close to home.

Capricorn Look for alternative ways to bring in cash, or call upon old friends to help you come up with a workable solution to any problem you face.

Aquarius Do what you can to help someone, but don't lose sight of your personal goals. A methodical pace and a practical outlook will help you avoid an emotional mishap.

Pisces Refrain from acting on assumptions. Your emotions will be difficult to control when dealing with both personal and professional situations. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

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O	L	E	O		I	S	A	A	C		U	S	S	R
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